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## SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate wish to express their sincere condolences to the family and friends of Jane Gidwitz, a devoted supporter of the arts in Chicago and a longtime board member of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, who passed away on December 4, 2001; and

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WHEREAS, Jane Louise Blumenthal was born in Philadelphia to Jacob and Jeanette Blumenthal; her family ran a well-known chocolate business that invented such popular products as Raisinettes and Goobers; and

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WHEREAS, Mrs. Gidwitz attended Sophie Newcomb College in New Orleans, where she studied liberal arts; after returning to Philadelphia, she met her future husband, Gerald, on a blind date in 1943 while he was in town on a sales trip for Helene Curtis; they were married in 1944; and

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WHEREAS, While her children were young, Mrs. Gidwitz devoted most of her time to raising them, but she was also active in the Ravinia Association in Highland Park; as her children grew up, she dedicated more time to supporting the arts and culture; and

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WHEREAS, Mrs. Gidwitz served on committees at the Art Institute and the Field Museum and was a longtime member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Society; she was also a member of the Lincoln Park Zoological Society and the University of Chicago women's board, and she chaired several charity events, including the Medical Research Institute Council's Crystal Ball for Michael Reese Hospital; and

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WHEREAS, Mrs. Gidwitz devoted herself most passionately to a small theater troupe that got its start in a church basement; in Steppenwolf's early days, Mrs. Gidwitz became a great fan of the edgy, sometimes wild company; in 1986, after

1 years of attending its plays, Mrs. Gidwitz joined the board  
2 of directors, and two years later, with the company  
3 performing in a converted dairy and financing falling apart  
4 for construction of a real theater, Mrs. Gidwitz helped  
5 convince the company it could raise the funds for a new  
6 building and in 1991 the new Steppenwolf Theatre opened at  
7 1650 N. Halsted St.; and

8 WHEREAS, The passing of Jane Gidwitz will be deeply felt  
9 by all who knew and loved her, especially her husband, Gerald  
10 Gidwitz; her sons, Ronald, James, Peter and Thomas Gidwitz;  
11 her daughter, Nancy; and her nine grandchildren; therefore,  
12 be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SECOND GENERAL  
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
15 all who knew her, the death of Jane Gidwitz of Chicago,  
16 Illinois; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
18 presented to the family of Jane Gidwitz with our sincere  
19 condolences.